

IndianaNRF.org *NEWS*

Indiana Natural Resources Foundation
402 W. Washington St. W256
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: (317) 234-5447

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Dr. Laura Hare Charitable Trust grant to expand Loblolly Marsh

The Indiana Natural Resources Foundation has received a \$27,000 grant from the Dr. Laura Hare Charitable Trust to expand Loblolly Marsh Nature Preserve by 95 acres.

“A part of the mission of the Dr. Laura Hare Charitable Trust is to enhance Indiana’s natural environment through preservation and protection of ecologically significant natural areas.” Indiana Natural Resources Foundation executive director Bourke Patton said. “Supporting the acquisition of land for restoration of wetlands is a wonderful way to fulfill their mission and we are privileged to be their partner on this project.”

The purpose of the Dr. Laura Hare Charitable Trust is to preserve the natural environment by acquiring and maintaining ecologically significant undeveloped land, such as swamps, marshes, forest, wilderness tracts, and other natural areas, and maintaining the land for the purpose of preserving it in its natural state. Education and environmental stewardship are also areas of great interest to the Trust.

In Indiana, over 85% of our wetlands are lost. Wetlands result in cleaner water and provide habitat for a wide range of species. In Indiana 11 species of waterfowl use wetlands for nesting and 28 species use wetlands as migration/ wintering habitat. The Loblolly Marsh is an ongoing restoration project which seeks to restore a portion of the wetlands which inspired many of Gene Stratton-Porter’s works. The original 13,000 acre wetland has been lost to develop but beginning with a mere 143 acres in 1996, today the marsh nears 1,500 acres of restored wetlands.

The ongoing growth and restoration taking place at Loblolly Marsh would not be possible without the support of Hoosier’s far and wide. Thanks to the support of the Dr. Laura Hare Charitable Trust, the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation and Friends of the Limberlost, 95 more acres will be restored and preserved in 2009.

Overtime, and with the support of our partners, we are working to undo the reckless destruction of these wetlands which Stratton-Porter witnessed. The Limberlost is returning as Loblolly Marsh and with it the species, the serenity, the beauty and the inspiration that captivated Stratton-Porter will stir generations to come.

The Indiana Natural Resources Foundation is a not-for-profit organization which raises funds to support and sustain the educational and scientific programs of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Learn more about the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation online at www.IndianaNRF.org